

Serial No. 10/728,040

Atty Dkt No. 706499US2

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REMARKS:

Applicant has carefully reviewed the Examiner's comments in the Office Action and has prepared the following response.

Claims 1 – 6, 11, 14 and 16 have been cancelled.

Claims 7 – 10, 12, 15 and 17 have been amended.

Claims 7 – 10, 12, 13, 15 and 17 - 20 remain pending in this application.

Initially, Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 19 and 20 are allowed and claims 4, 5, 10, 12 and 13 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all base and intervening claims. By this paper, Applicant has rewritten claims 10 and 12 into independent form including any base and intervening claims. In addition, Applicant has rewritten claims 7 - 9 to depend directly from amended allowable independent claim 10 and Applicant has rewritten claims 15 and 17 to depend directly from amended allowable independent claim 12. Furthermore, Applicant notes that claims 13 and 18 depend (in original form) either directly or indirectly from amended independent claim 12.

As a result, Applicant believes the application is now in condition for allowance.

While Applicant has cancelled rejected claims from this application, the cancellation of these claims is not to be construed as an acquiescence to the Examiner's position regarding the asserted references or the rejected claims. Applicant has cancelled the rejected claims merely to expedite issuance of the allowed claims, and hereby preserve the right to again pursue the rejected claims in a continuation application.

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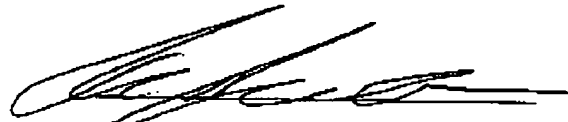
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In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that the claims are patentable over the prior art and the application is in a condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and an early notice of allowance. The Examiner is cordially invited to telephone the undersigned for any reason which would help advance the instant application to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dated: 18 SEP 2006

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